



DASYURUS GEOFFROYI, *Gould.*

Geoffroy's *Dasyurus*.

Dasyurus Geoffroyi, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part viii. p. 151.—Waterh. Nat. Lib. *Marsupialia*, p. 132.—*Ib.*, Nat. Hist. Mamm., vol. i. p. 437.—Cat. of Mamm. in Brit. Mus., p. 98.

No other species of the present genus is so widely distributed over the continent of Australia as the *Dasyurus Geoffroyi*, which inhabits the whole of the southern portion of the country from Moreton Bay on the east to Swan River on the west. Unlike the *D. Viverrinus* and *D. maculatus* which frequent the country lying between the mountain ranges and the sea, the present animal appears to be exclusively confined to the regions on the interior side of the hills, the specimens I have seen having been procured on the Liverpool Plains in New South Wales, the Murray Scrub in South Australia, and beyond the ranges of Swan River on the western coast. I have stated of the other members of this genus that they are nocturnal in their habits, but that the present is not strictly so is shown by my having encountered one at midday while silently wandering in the Murray Scrub in South Australia, which, squirrel-like, ran up to the topmost branches of a neighbouring gum-tree, whence I immediately dislodged it with my gun in order to obtain a knowledge of the species.

I believe that the *Dasyurus Geoffroyi* is never subject to those variations of colour so conspicuous in *D. Viverrinus*.

Its brown tail clothed with much shorter hairs than in any of its congeners is a character by which it may at all times be distinguished from either of them.

I have named this species in honour of M. Geoffroy de St. Hilaire, the eminent French naturalist, in token of respect for his valuable labours in the field of science.

“The fur is moderately long, rather soft, and on the upper part of the body of greyish hue, but much suffused with yellow, and pencilled with black; and these parts moreover, as well as the sides of the body, are adorned with numerous irregular white spots; the head has a few small white spots only, and is often of a greyer hue than other parts, but the muzzle is somewhat tinted with brownish, and in front of the eye is a dusky patch; the ears are dusky brown and clothed externally with minute blackish brown hairs; internally with longish pencilled black and grey hairs, at or near the anterior margin; but towards the apex, and on the hinder parts, the hairs are minute and brownish; the under parts of the body are white, or very nearly so; the fore feet are brownish, sometimes brownish white; the hind feet are nearly white, or greyish suffused with yellow; the tail is yellowish at the base, but much pencilled with black, the ends of the hairs being of that colour; the black gradually increases towards the tip of the tail, and usually about one-third is entirely black.”

The Plate represents the two sexes of the natural size.